

Integrated Arabic

العربية والمحكى
Syrian Colloquial

a functional course

Arabic

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TO RIFA'AT

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VOICES

Mary-Jane Liddicoat, Iman Abdul Rahim, Rana Al-Atrash, Assem Al-Bunney and Abu Mohammad.

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Syrian Colloquial Arabic, a Functional Course

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Useful phrases for the classroom I

INSTRUCTIONS

<i>ftah, -i, -u</i> ...lé-ktaab	open... the book	افتح، -ي، -وا الكتاب...
<i>sakker, sakkri, -u</i> ...lé-ktaab	close... the book	سُكّر، -ي، -وا الكتاب...
<i>talleخ, -i, -u</i> ...ع a-l-looh ...ع a-l-misaal	look ...at the board ...at the example	طلّع، -ي، -وا عاللوح... المثال...
<i>smaaq, -i, -u</i>	listen	اسمع، -ي، -وا
<i>iid, -i, -u</i> ...él-kélmé baغdi ...él-jémle baغdi	repeat ...the word after me ...the sentence after me	عيدي، -ي، -وا الكلمة بعدي... الجملة بعدي...
<i>s'ad, -i, -u</i>	ask a question	سؤال، -ي، -وا
<i>rédd, -i, -u</i> ...ع a-s-su'aal	answer ...the question	ردّ، -ي، -وا السؤال...
<i>égra, égri, égru</i> ...b-soot ع aали	read ...it out aloud	اقر، -ي، -وا بصوت عالي...
<i>ktob, -i, -u</i>	write	اكتب، -ي، -وا
<i>qul, -i, -u...</i>	say	قول، -ي، -وا
<i>shtéghel, -i, -u</i> ...kéll tneen maغ baeغd ...kéll waahed la-haado	do ...it in groups of two ...by yourself	اشتغل، -ي، -وا كل اثنين مع بعض... كل واحد لحاله...
<i>kéllna sawa</i>	all of us together	كلنا سوا
<i>kamaan marra</i> <i>marra taanye</i>	(do/say it) again (do/say it) again	كمان مرّة مرة تانية

The endings *-i* and *-u* above are (respectively) feminine and plural. The ending used on the tape is the plural. You will find more useful phrases for the classroom on the inside back cover.

Useful phrases for the classroom II

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

<i>fū su'aal?</i>	are there any questions?	في سؤال؟
<i>uandi su'aal</i>	I have a question	عندی سؤال
<i>maa fhénit</i>	I don't understand	ما فهمت
<i>kiif bétqul...</i>	how do you say...	كيف بتقول...
<i>kiif btéktob...</i>	how do you write...	كيف بتكتب...
<i>...b-él-عarabi?</i>	...in Arabic?	بالعربي؟
<i>mérqul...</i>	we say...	منقول...
<i>mnéktob...</i>	we write...	منكتب...
<i>masalan...</i>	for example...	مثلاً
<i>shu yaεni?</i>	what does it mean?	شو يعني؟
<i>shu maεnaat...</i>	what is the meaning of...	شو معنات...
<i>...ha-l-kélmé?</i>	...this word?	هالكلمة؟
<i>...ha-l-jémle?</i>	...this sentence?	هالجملة؟
<i>shu él-farq been...w...?</i>	what's the difference between...and....?	شو الفرق بين...و...؟
<i>nafs ésh-shi</i>	it's the same thing	نفس الشي
<i>mékhtélef</i>	it's different	مختلف
<i>shu él-waziife?</i>	what is the homework?	شو الوظيفة؟
<i>él-waziife....</i>	the homework is...	الوظيفة...
<i>...tarriin raqam...</i>exercise number...	تمرین رقم...
<i>...saħħa....</i>	...page...	صفحة...

STUDY TIP

Make your own Syrian Arabic-English dictionary. Index a notebook or folder (index labels are included for this purpose). Every time you learn a new word, record the word and its meaning on the appropriate page. This way you not only revise new words, but you have a ready reference on hand whenever you need it. As for an English-Syrian Arabic dictionary, you cannot go past the fully transliterated

A Dictionary of Syrian Arabic: English-Arabic
Karl Stowasser and Moukhtar Ani
Georgetown University
ISBN 0-87840-010-9

Integrated Arabic - Overview

Arabic is the language spoken by over 200 million people throughout the Middle East and North Africa. It is one of the six official languages of the United Nations, the language of Islam and its holy book the Qur'aan, and the language in which some of the world's greatest works of literature, science and history have been written. Many events of global importance--political, economic, social and religious--take place in the Arab world, and the amount of foreign interest and involvement in the region is ever increasing.

Yet Arabic is not a widely-studied language in Europe and the West, and where it is studied it tends to be studied--and taught--badly. We believe there are two major reasons for this:

1. There are a number of fundamental misconceptions about the nature of Arabic and its teaching as a foreign language, both among Arabs and in the West;
2. There is a dreadful paucity of good, modern and interesting teaching and reference material at the disposal of students and teachers.

One of the fundamental misconceptions is that Arabic is an impossibly difficult language. While it is true that Arabic is not an Indo-European language and contains many features and complexities that speakers of European languages find alien and challenging, it is not nearly as unfathomable and mysterious as it is often made out to be. Arabic grammar is regular, the vocabulary has an inherent logic and ordering that often makes it possible to guess the meaning of a word, and the script--however squiggly it may look--can be learned in a few hours. Pronunciation is difficult, but is a matter of drill and practice: there is no intellectual barrier to be surmounted.

We are convinced that a good part of this reputation as a fearsomely difficult language is due to the lack of good, accessible textbooks and other materials, and indeed to the lack of good teaching methods (although thankfully this is beginning to change).

The other major misconception concerns the nature of Arabic itself. Modern Arabic falls into two distinct parts: the formal, written language which is shared throughout the Arab world, and the colloquial dialects, which are restricted to a particular country or region. The former is known as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA or *fusha*), the latter we will refer to as the Colloquials (*qamiyya*). MSA is used in modern literature, the press, radio and television, and in formal occasions, conferences, speeches and so on. The Colloquials are used in everyday life: at work, in the home, with friends, in songs, plays, movies and soap operas.

The misconception is this: that one is learning "Arabic" by learning just one or the other. Outside the Middle East, especially in universities, it is almost certain that what is meant by "Arabic" is MSA. It is often argued that MSA is the "true" Arabic, and that since it is universally understood in the Arab world from Iraq to Morocco it is not necessary or desirable to deal with the Colloquials. Arabs themselves often perpetuate this myth, dismissing their own dialect as "slang", lower-class, or uneducated speech and insisting that foreigners learn MSA.

None of this is true. While it is possible to communicate with almost any Arab in MSA, it is often unnatural and awkward to do so, and the communication will be mostly one-way. Speaking only MSA is a little like being unable to speak English, only to read and write it, and to communicate by writing on a notepad and showing it to people. There will be no shortage of people willing to write things down for you, but it is hardly a natural way to communicate, and you will miss a lot. To be restricted to MSA is to miss out on the idiom, colour and humour of everyday language, on songs, jokes, stories, movies and other aspects of popular culture. You will not be talking to friends and colleagues in their native language.

Similarly, it is quite common for foreigners who find themselves in an Arab country to learn the local Colloquial, eschewing the supposedly more difficult MSA. For them, newspapers, books, television and radio news, and even road signs, will remain forever inaccessible.

We believe that speaking Arabic means speaking both MSA and at least one Colloquial dialect, as the Arabs do; adjusting your language to the situation. If you give a speech to a business gathering, you speak in MSA. In a formal meeting, you might speak a mixture of MSA and Colloquial. With colleagues at the office, you would speak mainly Colloquial, depending on the topic. In social settings, Colloquial is almost universal, and attempting to direct a taxi driver in MSA is a waste of time.

The problem for the foreign student, unfortunately, is that the differences between MSA and the Colloquials, and among the Colloquials themselves, are not trivial. Another problem, which leads us to the second of our two points above, is that as far as we are aware no textbook or teaching system exists which teaches MSA and a Colloquial in an integrated and coordinated way.

More generally, the quality of published materials for learning Arabic is universally poor. Quite apart from the problem of failing to consider the whole of Arabic rather than just MSA or Colloquial, currently available Arabic texts tend to be old-fashioned, unclear, uninspiring and dull. Example text passages or dialogues are often inauthentic, illustrate an unrealistic use of language (MSA used in chatting with a friend, for example), or cover material irrelevant to the likely needs of the modern student. Grammatical explanations tend to be over-complicated and couched in the style of 19th century English grammars. The few more progressive and engaging texts-- notably those published by the American University in Cairo--are spoiled by very poor typography and production. The contrast with the materials available for other "exotic" languages such as Japanese, which arguably are of lesser global importance, is surprising and disappointing.

This book is the first of a series entitled *Integrated Arabic* which is designed to redress these problems. *Integrated Arabic* will initially consist of three modules: Modern Standard Arabic, Syrian Colloquial Arabic, and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic. We hope in the future to add modules for the other major colloquial dialects (Gulf, North African, and Iraqi). The modules are designed to be used simultaneously, sequentially or individually, according to the preferences and circumstances of the student. We suggest that for maximum benefit the student simultaneously use the MSA module with one of the Colloquial modules. The modules may be used alone as a self-contained course, or as an adjunct to an Arabic course at a college or other institution.

While each module is self-contained, the key to the concept is the integration between the modules. Grammatical concepts are covered in parallel, so that the student can compare similarities and identify differences between MSA and Colloquial while developing a feel for the common root of both forms of the language. Vocabulary is also, as far as possible, developed in parallel. But most importantly, the material presented in the dialogues and text passages in the MSA module is the type of material that would be expressed in MSA in the Arab world, and the material in the Colloquial modules is material appropriate to Colloquial expression. Thus, a particular grammatical point will be illustrated in a chapter in the MSA module by a passage dealing with politics, society, economics, geography, history, etc, in the form of a newspaper article or excerpt from a speech, for example. In the equivalent chapter in the Colloquial modules, the same or similar point will be illustrated by a dialogue from everyday life--at work, shopping, travelling, talking with friends--wherever possible involving the same topic or theme as the MSA text.

We have endeavoured to make the modules as interesting, entertaining and relevant as possible, and adhere to the highest standards of clarity and readability in typography and layout. We have also tried to accommodate a range of learning styles: extensive exercises and drills are

included for those who want them; the modules are designed to be equally suitable for those who prefer to work quickly through a number of chapters to get a feel for the concepts, before going back to wrestle with the details. The tapes which accompany each module are an indispensable part of the course.

Unfortunately we cannot provide the final vital ingredient for the successful study of Arabic: a good teacher. These are difficult to find, but they do exist. We hope that *Integrated Arabic* will provoke more interest in the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, and encourage Arabic teachers to develop new techniques and materials, train others to teach, and start to present Arabic as it should be presented: as a rich, appealing, useful and above all conquerable language.

About This Book

Syrian Colloquial Arabic is the first module of the *Integrated Arabic* series to be produced. It deals with modern colloquial Arabic as it is spoken in Syria*, with an emphasis on practical, everyday language useful to the foreign resident.

The book leads you through a variety of real-life situations, and the language necessary to deal with them—directing a taxi, negotiating for a hotel room, haggling with the greengrocer, speaking on the telephone, and so on. This practical material has been carefully fitted to a structured exposition of SCA grammar.

You may use it for self-study, with a teacher or in a class. Many of the exercises are designed to be done with another person, so if you are studying alone it is worthwhile getting a Syrian friend or teacher to help you from time to time if possible.

The book also covers basic reading and writing. While written Arabic is generally Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), an ability to read road and shop signs, Arabic numbers, restaurant menus and bills, and to write one's name and telephone number is a valuable skill for the Colloquial Arabic speaker. While the book is fully transliterated and can be used without learning to read Arabic, we recommend making the extra effort as this will assist you if you go on to study MSA.

Syrian Colloquial Arabic is designed to be a handy reference even after you have finished the course. It therefore contains much more vocabulary than you should try to memorise in one go. We recommend that you select only five or six vocabulary items in each exercise or list to memorise, and learn the others as you need them.

Mary-Jane Liddicoat

Richard Lennane

* There are a number of differing regional dialects in Syria. This book is generally based on the dialect spoken in Damascus, which is understood throughout Syria.

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Introduction

THE ARABIC ALPHABET

Arabic is written from the right to the left. The Arabic alphabet has 29 letters. Before you learn anything more about the alphabet, do the following exercise.

1. Letter Shapes Exercise. This exercise is designed to make you think about shapes and help you identify common features. It is not designed to see if you have already memorised the Arabic alphabet. There is therefore, no single “correct” answer.

- Cut out the cards in the writing practice materials section at the back of this book.
- Spread these cards out on a table and look at the shapes on each card.
- Try arranging the shapes into logical groups: start by looking at their overall shape, then move on to other features, such as dots and tails.
- When you have done this, try to explain your arrangement to your teacher and classmates. Listen to the comments they have to make and be prepared to argue your case.
- Finally, look at the Alphabet Shapes and Groups table in the writing practice materials section at the back of this book to see how your arrangement compares.

The shapes you have just arranged are the 29 letters of the Arabic alphabet as they appear when written alone. (Each letter has two or three slightly different shapes, depending on whether it is used at the beginning, middle, or end of a word, or alone.) Before you practise writing the letters however, you must learn their sounds.

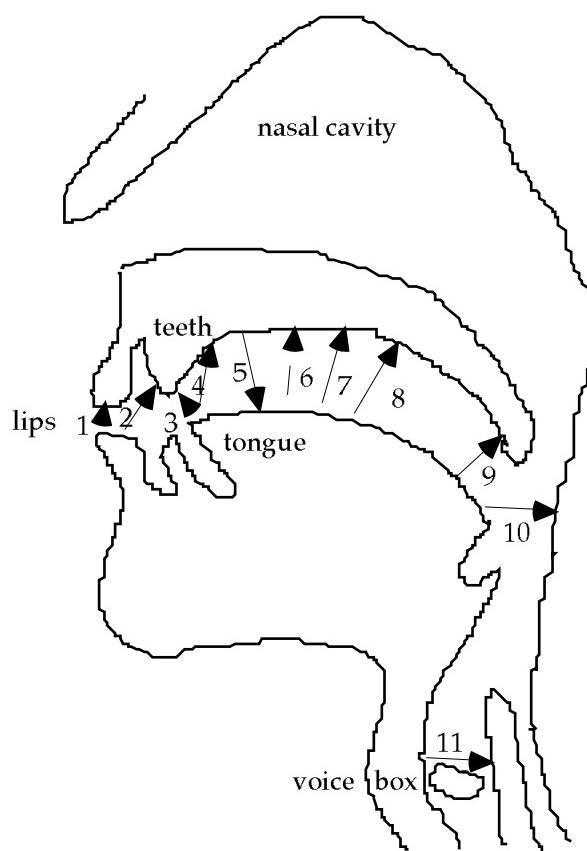
All but eight of the 29 sounds in the Arabic alphabet exist in English or its dialects. Look at the table on the next page and the ‘map’ of your mouth and throat and do the following exercise.



2. Letter Sounds Exercise. Listen and repeat each letter of the alphabet. Pay close attention to what part of your mouth or throat you are using to produce each sound. Check this with the ‘mouth map’ and your teacher. Don’t just rely on the example words in the sound column!

The eight sounds unfamiliar to English speaker are marked with an asterisk* in the table. Of these, the group of ‘emphatic’ consonants—*s* ص, *d* ض, *t* ط and *z* ز—presents the greatest problem. These sounds are characterised by a ‘heavy’ resonance which contrasts to the ‘light’ or ‘thin’ sound of the corresponding plain consonants *s* س, *d* د, *t* ت and *z* ز. To get the pronunciation right, begin by saying the ‘light’ version, for example *s* س as in ‘Sam’. You will notice that the tip of your tongue touches the area just behind your upper front teeth. Now say it again, depressing the middle of your tongue (5 on the mouth map) and tensing the tongue muscles as you say it. This will cause the vowel sound to change and the whole word becomes more like ‘psalm’ than ‘Sam’. The reason for this is that by depressing your tongue, you have created a larger space between your tongue and the roof of your mouth. Then try this technique with each of the other three emphatic letters.

MOUTH MAP



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
-				<i>t</i>	<i>t̬</i>		<i>k</i>		<i>q</i>		<i>q̬ l'</i>
+		<i>b</i>			<i>d</i>	<i>d̬</i>					
-			<i>f</i>	<i>th</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>s̬</i>	<i>sh</i>		<i>kh</i>		<i>h</i>
+				<i>z</i>	<i>z̬</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>gh</i>		<i>ɛ</i>	
+	<i>m</i>		<i>n</i>								
+			<i>l</i>								
+				<i>r</i>							
+					<i>w</i>			<i>y</i>			

+ voiced
- voiceless

Name	Alone	End	Middle	First	Trans	Sound
<i>Alif</i>	ا	ا	ا	ا	aa	as in 'car' or as in 'ma'am'
<i>Baa</i>	ب	ب	ب	ب	b	as in 'bet'
<i>Taa</i>	ت	ت	ت	ت	t	as in 'till'
<i>Thaa</i>	ث	ث	ث	ث	th	sometimes as in 'thin'
					t	sometimes as 'till'
					s	sometimes as in 'Sam'
<i>Jiim</i>	ج	ج	ج	ج	j	as in 'jam'
<i>Haa*</i>	ح	ح	ح	ح	h*	breathe out forcibly from throat as if cleaning glasses
<i>Khaa</i>	خ	خ	خ	خ	kh	as in Scottish 'loch'
<i>Daah</i>	د	د	د	د	d	as in 'dim'
<i>Zaal</i>	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	d	usually as in 'dim'
					z	sometimes as in 'zinc'
<i>Raa</i>	ر	ر	ر	ر	r	as in a trilled 'run'
<i>Zaay</i>	ز	ز	ز	ز	z	as in 'zinc'
<i>Siin</i>	س	س	س	س	s	as in 'Sam'
<i>Shiin</i>	ش	ش	ش	ش	sh	as in shoe
<i>Saad*</i>	ص	ص	ص	ص	s*	almost as in 'psalm'
<i>Daad*</i>	ض	ض	ض	ض	d*	almost as in 'dumb'
<i>Taa*</i>	ط	ط	ط	ط	t*	almost as in 'tar'
<i>Zaa</i>	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	q*	usually as in 'dumb' sometimes as in 'zeal'
<i>Eayn*</i>	ع	ع	ع	ع	ع*	a voiced version of h
<i>Ghayn</i>	غ	غ	غ	غ	gh	a voiced version of kh
<i>Faa</i>	ف	ف	ف	ف	f	as in 'off'
<i>Qaaf*</i>	ق	ق	ق	ق	q	usually as in the sound between 'uh oh' (a glottal stop)
	ق	ق	ق	ق	q*	sometimes as a deep-throated k
<i>Kaaf</i>	ك	ك	ك	ك	k	as in 'king'
<i>Laam</i>	ل	ل	ل	ل	l	as in 'laugh'
<i>Miim</i>	م	م	م	م	m	as in 'moon'
<i>Nuun</i>	ن	ن	ن	ن	n	as in 'neat'
<i>Haa</i>	ه	ه	ه	ه	h	as in 'hang'
<i>Waaw</i>	و	و	و	و	w (uuloo)	as in 'wet' (see pg 13)
<i>Yaa</i>	ي	ي	ي	ي	y (ii/ee)	as in 'yet' (see pg 13)
<i>Taa marbuuta</i>	ة	ة	(ـ)	(ـ) see page 11	e a	usually as in 'pet' sometimes as in 'cat'
<i>Hamza</i>	ء				'	a glottal stop

Legend: * sounds unfamiliar to an English speaker. × cannot join to a letter following

Name	Alone	End	Middle	First	Trans	Sound
<i>Alif</i>	ا	ا	ء	ء	aa	as in 'car' or as in 'ma'am'
<i>Baa</i>	ب	ب	ب	ب	b	as in 'bet'
<i>Taa</i>	ت	ت	ت	ت	t	as in 'till'
<i>Thaa</i>	ث	ث	ث	ث	th	sometimes as in 'thin'
					t	sometimes as in 'till'
					s	sometimes as in 'Sam'
<i>Jiim</i>	ج	ج	ج	ج	j	as in 'jam'
<i>Haa*</i>	ح	ح	ح	ح	h*	breathe out forcibly from throat as if cleaning glasses
<i>Khaa</i>	خ	خ	خ	خ	kh	as in Scottish 'loch'
<i>Daah</i>	د	د	د	د	d	as in 'dim'
<i>Zaal</i>	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	d	usually as in 'dim'
					z	sometimes as in 'zinc'
<i>Raa</i>	ر	ر	ر	ر	r	as in a trilled 'run'
<i>Zaay</i>	ز	ز	ز	ز	z	as in 'zinc'
<i>Siin</i>	س	س	س	س	s	as in 'Sam'
<i>Shiin</i>	ش	ش	ش	ش	sh	as in shoe
<i>Saad*</i>	ص	ص	ص	ص	s*	almost as in 'psalm'
<i>Daad*</i>	ض	ض	ض	ض	d*	almost as in 'dumb'
<i>Taa*</i>	ط	ط	ط	ط	t*	almost as in 'tar'
<i>Zaa</i>	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	d*	usually as in 'dumb'
					z*	sometimes as in 'zeal'
ع <i>ayn*</i>	ع	ع	ع	ع	ع*	a voiced version of h
غ <i>Ghayn</i>	غ	غ	غ	غ	gh	a voiced version of kh
ف <i>Faa</i>	ف	ف	ف	ف	f	as in 'off'
ق <i>Qaaf*</i>	ق	ق	ق	ق	q	usually as in the sound between 'uh oh' (a glottal stop)
	ق	ق	ق	ق	q*	sometimes as a deep-throated k
<i>Kaaf</i>	ك	ك	ك	ك	k	as in 'king'
<i>Laam</i>	ل	ل	ل	ل	l	as in 'laugh'
<i>Miim</i>	م	م	م	م	m	as in 'moon'
<i>Nuun</i>	ن	ن	ن	ن	n	as in 'neat'
<i>Haa</i>	ه	ه	ه	ه	h	as in 'hang'
<i>Waaw</i>	و	و	و	و	w (uu/oo)	as in 'wet' (see pg 13)
<i>Yaa</i>	ي	ي	ي	ي	y (ii/ee)	as in 'yet' (see pg 13)
<i>Taa marbuuta</i>	ة	ة	(ـ) see page 11	e	u	usually as in 'pet'
				a	u	sometimes as in 'cat'
<i>Hamza</i>	هـ			'		a glottal stop

Legend: * sounds unfamiliar to an English speaker. × cannot join to a letter following

- 3. Letter Writing Practice.** Each letter has two or three slightly different shapes, depending on whether it is used alone or at the beginning, middle, or end of a word. Use the worksheets to practise writing the letters. Make sure you follow the direction of the arrows. As you write each letter practise saying the sound.

Note that letters which have ‘tails’ looping below the line lose them when they are joined to another letter.

Similarly shaped letters with a different number of dots might be hard to remember. To help you, you can make up reminder phrases, for example

- one dot north is ن *n*
- one dot below is ب *b*
- two dots above is ت *t*
- three dots above is ث *th*
- two dots below ي remind you of e-y-es, while if you tilt your head when you look at ي at the end of a word, it looks like this ...ay!

- 4. Can you identify letters within words? Circle all the letters which correspond with the letter on the right (regardless of position), for example**

كتب	يتم	كتب	برد	ب
قلب	بدها	رأي	اب	ا
كبد	ورد	لعب	برج	ب
كتب	تعب	كتب	شرب	ت
تحت	ثبت	بحث	وثق	ث
لوح	رجح	جرح	حلج	ج
فحص	حول	لوح	فجل	ح
خسر	وسمخ	جمع	رخصة	خ
دفع	رسم	ودع	عود	د
بدل	نوم	ذكي	ذهب	ذ
رسم	قرص	عصر	وزن	ر
ذكر	زرع	بذر	ذكي	ز

شرب	سمع	شرس	عسل	س
دشر	شمس	رسب	وشوش	ش
ناقص	صعب	فرض	قصر	ص
حضر	شمل	بعض	ضرب	ض
طقس	مطر	زرع	نقط	ط
حضر	حفظ	ظرف	بوظة	ظ
وقع	عمل	فعل	بنت	ع
بغل	عدل	غير	بالغ	غ
عرف	سرق	فشل	نفس	ف
فوق	عقل	قفل	فول	ق
ركب	قطع	ضحك	كتب	ك
لعب	كلب	قول	رأي	ل
عمل	نهار	مسح	لوم	م
عين	عند	تمر	نمل	ن
معه/ياه	نهر	شمس	هرب	ه
فطم	قول	ولو	قمر	و
يمين	علي	تبع	بيت	ي
عربية	ايوه	قطة	عشرة	ة

5. The words in the column on the right are all names of capitals, and the words in the column on the left are all countries. Match each capital with its country. Refer to the table on page 3 if you need to. Note that except at the beginning of a word *w* and *y* can also be pronounced *uu* (or *oo*) and *ii* (or *ee*) respectively.

كينيا	باريس
عمان	واشنطن
فرنسا	بروكسل
بريطانيا	كنبرا
بلجيكا	مسقط
اليابان	لندن
امريكا	دمشق
فنلندا	نايروبى
بولندا	بيروت
لبنان	هيلسنكي
سوريا	طوكيو
استراليا	وارسو

6. Write each of the words in the previous exercise. The rule of thumb when joining letters is

- all letters can be joined to the previous letter;
- all but six letters--*aa* ا, *r* ر, *z* ز, *d* د, *d/z* ذ, and *w* و--can be joined to the letter following; and
- try not to take your pen off the paper (unless a letter cannot be joined) until you have finished writing the whole word, then go back and add the dots.

بَارِيس

7. This exercise is to help you identify word shapes. Circle the two matching words, as shown in the example.

راتب	بارد	بارز	نازل	بارد	ننزل	بارك
طلاب	ظلم	طالب	كلا布	طالب	طلب	كلام
كثير	كتاب	كثار	كبار	كلا布	كاتب	كتاب
كلب	كيلو	كتب	كلا布	كبذ	كان	كلب
تاب	بال	باب	ناب	باب	بات	ياه
كريم	بكر	كنز	كبير	كبيرة	كبير	كثير
بلغ	نام	بلغ	باع	بلغ	بلغ	ثلج
شوية	بيشوي	شافية	إشارية	شتوية	شمسيّة	شمسيّة
سنويّا	ساويت	سيارة	استنى	سيارة	سورية	سنويّة
روى	دار	ذكي	دار	ذكر	دور	درى
واجه	واحد	واحدة	وادي	وحيد	واحة	واحد
سليم	مسلم	سلام	سلم	اسلام	سلام	سلام
جايب	حليب	خرجت	جايسب	جايب	حوارب	جواب
مفسلة	مفتوح	منفوخ	مفتاح	معافي	مفتوح	مفاصي
مدير	بريد	ترد	برد	فريـد	برـيد	نبـيز

8. The words in the column on the right are all the first names of famous actors, and the words in the column on the left are their last names. Try to read each one without referring to the table on page 3 and then match the first and last names.

براندو	طوني
تايلور	مارلين
برتون	رتشارد
كيرتس	مارلون
لي	بريجيت
مونرو	جون
فوندا	صوفيا
باردو	إليزابيث
لورين	جين
ترافولتا	بروس

9. Write your own name in Arabic here.



10. Listen to each word and fill in the missing dots either above or below the letters, as necessary.

بٰيٰت	بٰت	بٰات	١
بٰاٰن	بٰاٰب	بٰاٰب	٢
لٰس	إٰس	بٰاٰب	٣
نٰصَاب	عٰب	بٰك	٤
سٰس	كٰن	بٰي	٥
بٰاٰب	رٰاب	سٰ	٦
بٰرول	بٰاٰب	بٰاٰب	٧
بٰوون	بٰارر	سٰارل	٨
بٰيٰت	بٰرادي	بٰوربٰوون	٩
سٰس	حٰاب	بٰرد	١٠

11. Join the letters to make Arabic names. Remember, try not to take your pen off the paper until you have finished writing the whole word.

.....	م ح م د	١
.....	أ ح م د	٢
.....	إ ب ر ا ه ي م	٣
.....	ع ل ي	٤
.....	ه ش ا م	٥
.....	ي و س ف	٦
.....	ع ب د ا ل ل ه	٧
.....	ف ا ي ز	٨
.....	ر ي م ا	٩
.....	س م ي ر ة	١٠
.....	م ر ي م	١١
.....	و ف ا ء	١٢
.....	ه د ي	١٣
.....	ف ا ط م ة	١٤
.....	ز ي ن ب	١٥

By now you should be familiar with the shapes and sounds of the Arabic alphabet. If you wish to practise your writing even more there are additional alphabet practice sheets at the back of the book.



THE TAA MARBUUTA ة OR ئ

The *taa marbuuta* ة or ئ only comes at the end of nouns and adjectives and tells you that the word is feminine. The sound of the *taa marbuuta* ة or ئ is either 'a' as in 'cat', or 'e' as in 'pet', depending on which letter comes before it:

pronounced 'e' after

ب	ت	ث	ج	د	ذ	س	ز	ش	ف	ك	ل	م	ن	و	ي
b	t <i>th/t/s</i>	j	d	dl/z	z	s	sh	f	k	l	m	n	w	y	

pronounced 'a' after

ء	ق	ح	ض	ص	خ	ط	ظ	ع	غ	ه
'	<i>q/q'</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>kh</i>	s	d	t	dl/z	ع	<i>gh</i>	h

In other words, consonants that you are familiar with in English, such as *b* ب , *t* ت , *j* ج and so on, are followed by an 'e' sound while consonants peculiar to Arabic, such as *h* ح and *kh* خ , are followed by an 'a' sound. Only *r* ر is pronounced one way or the other, depending on the word.

The *taa marbuuta* is not officially a letter of the Arabic alphabet and is often called a 'hybrid' letter. This is because when you attach something to the end of word with a *taa marbuuta*--such as an attached pronoun--both the shape and sound of the *taa marbuuta* change to *t* ت .



THE HAMZA ؤ

The sound of *ahamza* is a glottal stop and it is transliterated '. The *hamza* ؤ is also not strictly speaking a letter. In fact, the hamza is a very strange creature indeed. Born without legs, you either find it sitting on another letter, or on the ground, for example

أب	إن	رئيس	شؤون	شاطئ	شهاداء
'ab	'enn	ra'iis	<i>shu'uun</i>	<i>shaati'</i>	<i>shuhada'</i>

The rules about which letter the *hamza* sits on are very complicated and more confusing than simply memorising the spelling of each word as it comes.



VOWELS

There are two types of vowels in Arabic: long and short. Short vowels are not represented by letters, but by small symbols above or below the letters. A text in which all the short vowels are indicated by these symbols is called a 'fully vowelled text'. Apart from the Qur'aan and children's books, fully vowelled texts are rare. In a normal text, unless a word is ambiguous, these symbols are never written. The symbols of the short vowels (written above the letter *b* →) and the sounds they represent are:

<i>Fatha</i>	بـ	ا	as is 'cat'
<i>Kasra</i>	بـ	ي	as in 'pet'
		ي	as in 'pin'
		ي	half the length of 'earn'
<i>Damma</i>	بـ	و	as in note
		و	as in put

At the end of some words you will see a double *Fatha* on an *Alif* ۱. This is pronounced *an* ۲.



12. Listen to each word. Look at its transliteration on the right and circle the corresponding Arabic word. Then write in the short vowel symbols, for example

١	ké tob	كتب	كذب	كـ	بـ
٢	<i>daras</i>	ذرة	دخل	ذـ	رـ
٣	<i>jabal</i>	خبر	جبل	خـ	بـ
٤	<i>shéreb</i>	شرب	شرف	شـ	رـ
٥	<i>katab</i>	كتب	قرب	قـ	تـ
٦	<i>médon</i>	متر	مدن	مـ	دـ
٧	<i>lébes</i>	لبن	بلغ	لـ	بـ
٨	<i>tabokh</i>	طعم	طبخ	طـ	عـ
٩	<i>féhem</i>	قرن	فهم	فـ	هـ
١٠	<i>lugha</i>	لبن	لغة	لـ	غـ

Long vowels have their own letters and are always written. The long vowels are:

<i>Alif</i>	ا	<i>aa</i>	as in 'car' or as in 'ma'am'
<i>Yaa</i>	ي	<i>ii</i>	as in 'meet'
		<i>ee</i>	as in 'air' (without the r)

<i>Waaw</i>	و	<i>uu</i>	as in 'food'
		<i>oo</i>	as in 'awe'

The 'semi-vowels' *Waaw* و and *Yaa* ي are pronounced as the consonants 'w' and 'y' respectively both at the beginning of a word or when they come before or after another long vowel.

Vowel sounds are also affected by emphatic consonants *s* ص, *d* ض, and *t* ط. In fact, this effect often spreads over the whole word making other consonant sounds 'darker'.



13. Listen and circle the word you hear. Only one of each set will be read. Pay attention to the length and position of the vowels, for example

سامح

١ سمح

قاتل

٢ قتل

مین

٣ من

رسول

٤ رسول

سین

٥ سن

مطار

٦ مطر

ركاب

٧ راكب

معامل

٨ معمل

رفع

٩ رفع

مكتوب

١٠ مكتب



THE SUKUUN ۔

Sometimes a consonant carries no vowel at all. The symbol for this is written above the consonant thus ۔ and is called a 'sukuun'. In transliteration this is indicated simply by writing the consonant alone, as in *ktaab* كُتاب (a book). Like the symbols for short vowels however, the sukuun is rarely written in a normal Arabic text.



14. First listen to these words. Then look at the transliteration and write in the short vowel and sukuun symbols as necessary, for example

مِفْتَاحٌ *méftaaḥ* ۱

كِتَابٌ *ktaab* ۲

دَفْتَرٌ *dafstar* ۳

مَكْتَبٌ *maktab* ۴

مَنْوَبٌ *mnoob* ۵

كَبِيرٌ *kbür* ۶

أَكْبَرٌ *akbar* ۷

بِنْفَسٌ *binafs* ۸

مَرْكَزٌ *markaz* ۹

مَنْيَحٌ *mnih* ۱۰



THE SHADDA بـ

Sometimes a consonant is doubled in length. The symbol for this is written above the consonant thus بـ and is called a 'shadda'. In transliteration this is indicated by writing the consonant twice, for example *mudarris* مدرّس (a male teacher). Unlike the other symbols, the *shadda* is often written in a normal Arabic text to ensure the meaning of a word is clear. Compare the following words in the Arabic script

<i>mudarrise</i>	a female teacher	مدرسة
<i>madrase</i>	a school	مدرسة

Note that if a consonant carries both a *shadda* and a *kasra* then the *kasra* is not written under the consonant, but under the *shadda* above the consonant, for example

مدرسة NOT مدرسة



15. Listen and circle the word you hear. Only one of each set will be read. Pay close attention to the length of the consonants, for example

سبب	١
درس	٢ درس
قطع	٣ قطع
كسر	٤ كسر
وصل	٥ وصل
ضحك	٦ ضحك
دهن	٧ دهن
وقع	٨ وقع
شعّل	٩ شعل
طلع	١٠ طلع
بياع	١١ باع
جرّاح	١٢ جراح



16. Can you tell the difference between almost identical words? Listen to these words and circle the word you hear. Only one of each set will be read, for example

قرب	قلب	كلب	١
معلق	مؤلف	مغلّف	٢
جرح	شجر	حجر	٣
هجرة	حشرة	حرة	٤
تجديد	تحديد	تهديد	٥
شكّ	شطّ	شقّ	٦
ثياب	تيار	طيار	٧
قصير	قصير	مثير	٨
بلغ	بلغ	بلغ	٩
ذنب	ظنّ	ضبّ	١٠
مشغول	معقول	مفغول	١١
فرار	قرار	فراخ	١٢
كلمة	كامل	كاملة	١٣
سيف	ضيف	صيف	١٤
غزالة	غسالة	رسالة	١٥
شبّاك	ثابت	شباط	١٦
طريق	صديق	ظريف	١٧
سؤال	مسائل	سؤال	١٨
ضيق	ضيّف	ضيّع	١٩
طلّ	ضلّ	دلّ	٢٠



SUN LETTERS

Locally, Damascus is called *ésh-shaam* الشام rather than *Dimashq* دمشق. Note the first *sh*- in *ésh-shaam* is actually written *al-* ال in Arabic. *al-* ال is the Arabic definite article, like “the” in English, and is pronounced *l*- , *él*- or *lé*- depending on the sentence. The most important thing to remember is that when it comes before a word beginning with a ‘sun letter’:

ن	ل	ظ	ط	ض	ص	ش	س	ز	ر	ذ	د	ث	ت		
		<i>t</i>	<i>th/ts</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>d/z</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>sh</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>ð</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d/z</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>n</i>

The sun letter is doubled and the ‘*l*’ sound disappears. This means *él-shaam* is pronounced *ésh-shaam*. All the other letters are called ‘moon letters’, except *j* which can be either depending on the word and the speaker.



17. Listen to the words and circle those beginning with a sun letter. Then write each word with the definite article *él-* ال, for example

eg. *shams* > *ésh-shams*



شمس < الشمس

qamar > *él-qamar*



قمر < القمر

a. *tazkara* >



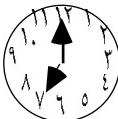
تذكرة <

b. *hawiyye* >



هوية <

c. *saat* >



ساعة <

d. *maṣraf* >



مصرف <

e. *fendiq* >



فندق <

f. *suura* >



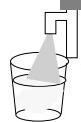
صورة <

g. *daftar* >



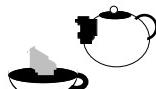
دفتر <

h. *mayy* >



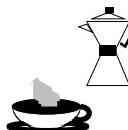
ميّ <

i. *shaay* >



شاي <

j. *qahwe* >



قهوة <



TRANSLITERATION

There is no official, or even standard way to write Arabic in roman letters. The method of transliteration used in this book is designed for the ease of a native speaker of English and uses as many English letters as possible, rather than phonetic symbols. The font used is METimes, designed specifically for the transliteration of Arabic.

One Arabic letter is used to represent itself--ع--rather than by an opening quotation mark (‘) as is common. This is to distinguish it clearly from the *Hamza* which is represented by a closing quotation mark (’).

Dots under letters--س، د، ت، ز، ح--indicate they are emphatic. A line underneath two letters indicates that they should be said together, not as two separate letters, for example *sh* ش NOT *sh* ش and *kh* خ NOT *kh* خ.

The strike-through bar is used with ق to indicate that it is pronounced as a glottal stop (as opposed to q which is pronounced as a deep-throated k). In Syrian colloquial almost all *Qaafs* are pronounced as a glottal stop.



HELPING VOWELS

The small raised letter ^é in the transliteration is pronounced the same as é. While é occurs as an integral part of words, ^é is a “helping vowel”, used to keep consonants coming together in awkward combinations.

The basic rule is in a string of three consonants, the first and second consonant must be separated by a helping vowel. For example, these two words need no helping vowel when alone

qareet

I read

قریت

ktaab

a book

كتاب

but look what happens when they are put together in a sentence:

qareet ktaab

I read a book

قریت كتاب

The Arabic script of course does not change. Similarly, when the definite article *el-* ال (the) precedes a noun beginning with a consonant cluster, for example:

el + ktaab

the + book

الكتاب

the position of the é sound moves between the first and second consonants.

lé-ktaab

the book

الكتاب



ACCENT AND INTONATION

There is not much point in writing an explanation of the rules of Arabic accent and intonation. It is better for you to develop your own feel by listening carefully to native speakers, either in person or on the tape. You will probably find that Arabic accent and stress patterns are relatively straightforward. There are a few points you should keep in mind however, which can make a big difference to being understood:

- length of vowel: be careful to make long vowels LONG
- doubled consonants (*shadda*): be careful to linger (counting “one-two” helps) over doubled consonants
- attached pronouns: be aware that the stress of, and position of vowels in a word change significantly when a pronoun is attached. This can make a word sound completely different.



THE ROOT SYSTEM

All Arabic words are derived from ‘roots’ which contain the basic meaning of the word. The root is made of three consonants. It is useful to be able to identify the root of a word because:

- the root of an unfamiliar word will often help you to guess its meaning; and
- Arabic dictionaries are generally arranged by root, rather than alphabetically.

For example the root *k-t-b* ك-ت-ب means “write”. Here are some words based on this root

<i>ktaab</i>	a book	كتاب
<i>kaateb</i>	a writer	كاتب
<i>maktab</i>	an office	مكتب
<i>maktabe</i>	a library	مكتبة
<i>maktuub</i>	a letter	مكتوب
<i>byéktob</i>	he writes	بيكتب
ع <i>am yéktob</i>	he is writing	عم يكتب

The vowels and the non-root letters give the word its specific meaning. The pattern of vowels and non-root letters itself carries meaning. For example, the pattern *maC₁C₂aC₃* (where C is a root letter) means “place”, so *maktab* مكتب means “place of writing”, *mal^uab* ملعب (root *l-ع-b* ل-ع-ب “play”) means “playground” and *matbakh* مطبخ (root *t-b-kh* ط-ب-خ “cook”) means “kitchen”.

As you progress you will get a feel for the meaning of various patterns, and we will highlight particularly common or useful patterns when they come up in the text.

When trying to identify the root of a word you might be confused by certain ‘pattern’ letters. Although these letters do occur regularly in roots, discard them first if there is confusion. These red herring letters are:

s-’a-l-t-m-w-n-y-h-aa

سألتمونيها

18. Four of the five words are from the same root. Circle the odd word out and write the common root letters in the space on the left, for example

١	مدرسة	تدریس	دروس	دارس	تصدیق	
٢	اسلام	مسلم	سلام	سلال	سلام	
٣	مكتبة	مكتوب	كبّ	كاتب	كتبوا	
٤	راكب	مركب	أكبر	تركيب	اتركب	
٥	عرفانة	المعروف	ارتفع	معارف	عارف	
٦	صفّي	أوصاف	تصفية	تصفّيين	كتبوا	
٧	عمل	معامل	تعليم	إستعمال	عمال	
٨	جمال	حاملة	حمل	حوامل	اتحمل	
٩	مضربة	صبور	ضربيّة	ضربت	مضارب	
١٠	أعصاب	عصابة	عصبي	متعصّب	غضب	

I Welcome to Damascus!

أهلاً و سهلاً فيكي بالشام!

CONVERSATION



1. Someone has just arrived in Damascus. Listen to the conversation. Do not look at the book while you are listening. Where is the conversation is taking place?

2. Now listen to the conversation again. What is the name of the woman?

3. Listen to the conversation for the last time. What is her nationality?

إميلي: صباح الخير.

الموظّف: صباح الخيرات. جواز السفر إذا بتريدي.

إميلي: تفضل...

الموظّف: شكرًا. شو إسمك؟

إميلي: أنا اسمى إميلي تايلور.

الموظّف: و انتي منين؟

إميلي: من استراليا. أنا معلمة.

الموظّف: آه، انتي استرالية؟ استراليا بلد حلوة كثير!

إميلي: ايه، بس بعيدة كثير.

الموظّف: طيب تفضلني، هي بஸبورك.

أهلاً و سهلاً فيكي بالشام.

ARABIC TRANSLITERATION ↪

- E: *sabaah él-kheer.*
 M: *sabaah él-kheeraat. jawaaz és-safar, iza béttriidi.*
 E: *tfaddal....*
 M: *shukran. shu ésmek?*
 E: *ana ésmi Emily Taayluur.*
 M: *w énti mneen?*
 E: *mén ostraalya. ana mżallme.*
 M: *aah, énti ostraliyye? ostraalya balad héltwe ktiir!*
 E: *ee, bass bżiide ktiir.*
 M: *tayyeb tfaddali, hayy basboorek. ahla wa sahla fuiki b-ésh-shaam*

**VOCABULARY ↪****Nouns**

<i>jawaaz és-safar</i>	passport	جواز السفر
<i>ésm</i>	name	اسم
<i>ana</i>	I	أنا
<i>énti</i>	you (f)	انتي
<i>ostraalya</i>	Australia (f)	استراليا
<i>mżallme</i>	teacher (f)	معلمة
<i>ostraliyye</i>	Australian (f)	استرالية
<i>balad</i>	country (f)	بلد
<i>basboor</i>	passport	بسبور
<i>ésh-shaam</i>	Damascus	الشام

Adjectives

<i>hélu, héltwe</i>	nice, good, beautiful, sweet	حلو، حلوة
<i>bżiid, bżiide</i>	far	بعيد، بعيدة

Adverbs

<i>ktiir</i>	very	كثير
--------------	------	------

Grammatical words

<i>shu</i>	(question word) what	شو
<i>-ek</i>	your (to a woman)	ـيكـ
<i>-i</i>	my	ـيـ
<i>mneen</i>	from where	منين
<i>mén</i>	from	من

<i>w</i>	and	و
<i>bass</i>	but	بس

Expressions

<i>sabaah él-kheer</i>	good morning	صباح الخير.
<i>sabaah él-kheeraat</i>	good morning (reply)	صباح الخيرات.
<i>iza bétriidi</i>	please (to a woman)	إذا بتريدي
<i>tfaddal</i>	here you are (to a man)	تفضل
<i>shukran</i>	thanks	شكرا
<i>aah</i>	oh	آه
<i>ee</i>	yes	ايه
<i>tayyeb</i>	okay, fine	طيب
<i>hayy</i>	here is	هي
<i>ahla wa sahla fiiki b-</i>	welcome to (to a w)	أهلا و سهلا فيكي بـ.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION ↔

- E: Good morning.
- M: Good morning. Passport please.
- E: Here you are....
- M: Thanks. What's your name?
- E: My name's Emily Taylor.
- M: And where are you from?
- E: From Australia. I'm a teacher.
- M: Oh, you're Australian? Australia is a very beautiful country!
- E: Yes, but it's very far away.
- M: Okay, here's your passport. Welcome to Damascus.



EXERCISES

FUNCTION A: MEETING SOMEONE FOR THE FIRST TIME

GREETINGS ♦ Syrians are very friendly and spend much of the time greeting each other. *ahla wa sahla* أهلاً و سهلاً and the more formal *ahlan wa sahlan* أهلاً و سهلاً are both commonly used to mean “nice to meet you”. The usual reply is:

<i>ahlan fiik</i>	and you (to a man)	أهلاً فيك
<i>ahlan fiiki</i>	and you (to a woman)	أهلاً فيكي
<i>ahlan fiikon</i>	and you (to a group)	أهلاً فيكن

ahleen أهلين and *marhaba* مرحباً are often used simply to say “hello” or “hi”.

1. Look at the pictures of these people greeting you. Give the appropriate reply (you have three to choose from), for example

A *ahlan wa sahlan*.



أهلاً و سهلاً.
ب أهلاً فيك.

B *ahlan fiik*.

a. A *ahla wa sahla*.



أهلاً و سهلاً.

B _____

b. A *ahla wa sahla*.



أهلاً و سهلاً.

B _____

c. A *ahleen*.



أهلين.

B _____

d. A *ahlan wa sahlan*.



أهلاً و سهلاً.

B _____

e. A *ahlan wa sahlan*.



أهلاً و سهلاً.

B _____

f. A *ahla wa sahla*.



أهلاً و سهلاً.

B _____

ATTACHED PRONOUNS => When you meet someone for the first time you will also need to be able to introduce yourself and ask for the other person's name.

ana ésmi Emily Taayluur

أنا اسمي إميلي تايلور

literally translates as "I, my name is Emily Taylor". *ana* أنت (I) however is only used for emphasis, so you can say just: *ésmi Emily Taayluur* اسمي إميلي تايلور (My name is Emily Taylor).

ésmi اسمي (my name) is actually made up of two parts: the noun *ésm* اسم (a name) and the ending *-i* -ي (my). You can use these endings, called attached pronouns, with most nouns to indicate something belongs to someone, for example:

 <i>ésm-i</i>	my name	اسمي
<i>ésm-ak</i>	your name (to a man)	اسمه
<i>ésm-ek</i>	your name (to a woman)	اسمه
<i>ésm-o</i>	his name	اسمه
<i>ésm-a</i>	her name	اسمها

Note that in *ésmo* اسمه (his name) and *ésmá* اسمها (her name) the 'h' sound is written in the Arabic script but not pronounced. The 'h' sound is pronounced when the attached pronoun follows a vowel.

THE VERB “TO BE” => Arabic does not use the verb ‘to be’ (am, is or are) in simple sentences like *ésmi Emily* اسمي إميلي which translates as “My name (is) Emily”.

QUESTION WORD “WHAT” => The word *shu* شو (what) is used at the beginning of the sentence and marks a question.

2. Answer this question about yourself.

A *shu ésmak / shu ésmek?*

أ شو إسمك؟

B *ésmi _____*

ب اسمي _____

ASKING QUESTIONS => All questions that cannot be answered with a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, such as *shu ésmak?* شو إسمك؟ (What's your name?) are asked with falling intonation.

3. Ask the names of the people pictured, for example

A *shu ésmá?*

أ شو إسمها؟

B *ésmá Emily.*

ب اسمها إميلي.



a. A *shu ésm_____?*

شو اسم_____؟

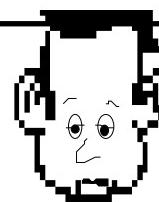
B *_____ Alison.*

اليسون _____



b. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ John.



شو اسم____؟

جون. _____

c. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ James.

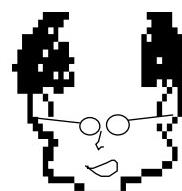


شو اسم____؟

جيمس. _____

d. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ Mark.



شو اسم____؟

مارك. _____

e. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ Hasan.



شو اسم____؟

حسن. _____

f. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ Rüma.

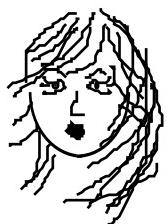


شو اسم____؟

ريما. _____

g. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ Féyruuz.



شو اسم____؟

فيروز. _____

h. A shu ésm ____?

B _____ Eumar.



شو اسم____؟

عمر. _____

PERSONAL PRONOUNS => As we mentioned above, in this sentence *ana* أنا (I) is used for emphasis. *ana* أنا (I) is called a 'personal pronoun'. Below are the personal pronouns you will practise in this chapter:

	<i>ana</i>	I	أنا
	<i>énte</i>	you (m)	انت
	<i>énti</i>	you (f)	انتي
	<i>huwwe</i>	he/it	هو
	<i>hiyye</i>	she/it	هي

COUNTRIES => Syrians will also be very interested to know where you come from. The conversation will go something like this:

- A *éntel énti mneen?* أنت / انتي منين؟
 B *ana mén ostraalya.* أنا من استراليا.

The word *mneen* is actually a contraction of two words:

mén + ween من + وين

from + where

4. Can you guess the country? Write the name of the country in the space provided.

<i>balad</i>	<i>country</i>	بلد
<i>ameerka</i>		أميركا
<i>briṭaanya</i>		بريطانيا
<i>kanada</i>		كندا
<i>éṣ-ṣiin</i>		الصين
<i>maṣr</i>		مصر
<i>fraansa</i>		فرنسا
<i>almaanya</i>		ألمانيا
<i>hoolanda</i>		هولاندا
<i>itaalya</i>		إيطاليا
<i>él-yaabaan</i>		اليابان
<i>él-érdon</i>		الأردن
<i>nyuu zilanda</i>		نيوزيلندا
<i>lēbnaan</i>		لبنان
<i>sbaanya</i>		اسبانيا
<i>suuriyaa</i>		سوريا

5. Answer this question about yourself.

- A *éntel énti mneen?* أنت / انتي منين?
 B *ana mén _____* أنا من _____

6. Look at the pictures and say where these people come from, for example

A *Emily mneen?*



إميلي منين؟

هي من استراليا.

B *hiyye ménostraadya.*

a. A *Rüma mneen?*



ريما منين؟

B *hiyye mén _____*

هي من _____

b. A *Alison mneen?*



اليسون منين؟

B *hiyye mén _____*

هي من _____

c. A *Féyruuz mneen?*



فيروز منين؟

B *hiyye mén _____*

هي من _____

d. A *Mark mneen?*



مارك منين؟

B *huwwe mén _____*

هو من _____

e. A *John mneen?*



جون منين؟

B *huwwe mén _____*

هو من _____

f. A *Eumar mneen?*



عمر منين؟

B *huwwe mén _____*

هو من _____

g. A *James mneen?*



جيمس منين؟

B *huwwe mén _____*

هو من _____

h. A *Hasan mneen?*



حسن منين؟

B *huwwe mén _____*

هو من _____

NATIONALITIES => In addition to saying which country you are from, it is useful to be able to say your *jénsiyye* جنسية (nationality). Nationalities are simply adjectives made from the name of the country: *-i* – is the ending if you are talking about a man and *-iyye* – is the ending if you are talking about a woman. Note that the feminine ending *-iyye* ية ends with a *taa marbuuta* تاء مربوطة. Nearly all feminine adjectives end with this letter.

7. Read the following sentences and circle the correct form of adjective, for example

Emily mén ostraalya

إميلي من استراليا.

hiyye ostraali(ostraadiyye)

هي استرالي(استرالية)

- a. *Mark mén ameerka* مارك من اميركا.
huwwe ameerki / ameerkiyye هو اميركي/اميركية
- b. *John mén briṭaanya* جون من بريطانيا
huwwe briṭaaniyye / briṭaani هو بريطانية / بريطاني
- c. *Alison mén kanada* اليسون من كندا
hiyye kanadi / kanadiyye هي كندي/كندية
- d. *Hasan mén él-érdon* حسن من الاردن
huwwe érdoniyye / érdoni هو اردنيّة / اردني
- e. *Rüma mén suuriyya* رima من سوريا
hiyye suuri / suuriyye هي سوري/سورية
- f. *Féryuuuz mén l'ébnaan* فيروز من لبنان
hiyye l'ébnaani / l'ébnaaniyye هي لبناني/لبنانية
- g. *عumar mén maṣr* عمر من مصر
huwwe maṣriyye / maṣri هو مصرية / مصرى
- h. *James mén nyuu ziilandia* جيمس من نيو زيلاندا
huwwe nyuu zilandi / nyuu ziilandiyye هو نيو زيلاندي/نيو زيلاندية

Now say what country you are from and your nationality.

ana mén (baladak) _____ . _____ (أنا من (بلدك))

ana (jénsiyytak) _____ . _____ (أنا (جنسيةتك))

NOUNS ➔ There is no 'it' in Arabic. All non-human nouns are either masculine or feminine. Human nouns can be either, depending on the person you are talking about. You can usually identify feminine nouns because they end with a *taa marbuuta* ة or ئ.

OCCUPATIONS ➔ You must choose between the masculine and feminine form of the word when you are talking about your *méhne* مهنة (occupation). Remember you can identify feminine nouns because they end with a *taa marbuuta* ة or ئ.

8. Circle the masculine or feminine form of the occupation to describe these people.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. <i>Emily: mællem / mællme</i> | teacher | إميلي: معلم / معلمة |
| b. <i>Rüma taaleb / taalbe</i> | student | ريما: طالب / طالبة |
| c. <i>John: mwazzaf / mwazzafe</i> | office worker, official | جون: موظف / موظفة |
| d. <i>Alison: mudiir / mudira</i> | manager, director, boss | أليسون: مدير / مديرة |
| e. <i>Mark safiir / safiira</i> | ambassador | مارك: سفير / سفيرة |
| f. <i>James: şahafi / şahafiyye</i> | journalist | جيمس: صحفي / صحافية |
| g. <i>Hasan: mhandes / mhandese</i> | engineer | حسن: مهندس / مهندسة |
| h. <i>Féryuuz doktuur / doktuura</i> | doctor | فirooz: دكتور / دكتورة |
| i. <i>ع عمر: déblomaasi / déblomaasiyye</i> | diplomat | عمر: دبلوماسي / دبلوماسية |

What is your occupation? Write it here:

él-méhne: _____ المهنة: _____

YES AND NO ➔ There are two ways to say 'yes' in Syrian Arabic. *ee* ايه is the most common, casual form while *næcam* نعم is more formal. You will also hear the word *eewa* ايوه which means "yes" in Egyptian. In Syria, this word means "I see..." rather than "yes".

la لا is the only word used to say 'no'. There are several actions however, used to express no without speaking. The most common--and most baffling to foreigners--is the quick glance upwards with the eyes. Sometimes this movement includes the whole head and is accompanied by a 'tsk' sound, while at others it is made just with the eyes and eyebrows. And often only the eyeballs move! It can be very subtle, so watch carefully.

9. Refer to the previous exercise and answer the following questions, for example

A *Emily mhandese?*

أ Emily مهندسة؟

B *la, (hiyye) mɛallme.*

ب لا، (هي) معلمة.



a. A *Féryuuuz déblomaasiyye?*

فیروز دبلوماسیة؟

B _____

b. A *Alison mwazzafe?*

الیسون موظفة؟

B _____

c. A *Riima mɛallme?*

ريما معلمة؟

B _____

d. A *Mark saḥafi?*

مارك صحفي؟

B _____

e. A *John mhandes?*

جون مهندس؟

B _____

f. A *James safiir?*

جيمس سفير؟

B _____

g. A *Hasan doktuur?*

حسن دكتور؟

B _____

h. A *Umar taaleeb?*

عمر طالب؟

B _____

WHAT DO YOU DO? => The word *méhne* مهنة (occupation) is used on official forms however when you want to ask someone in person what they “do for a living” use the verb *yéshtéghel* يشتغل (to work), for example

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <i>shu byéshéghel?</i> | what does he do? | شو بيشتغل؟ |
| | <i>shu btéshéghel?</i> | what does she do? | شو بتشتغل؟ |
| | <i>shu btéshéghel?</i> | what do you (m) do? | شو بتشتغل؟ |
| | <i>shu btéshégheli?</i> | what do you (f) do? | شو بتشتغلي؟ |

The *b-* in front of the verb indicates that it is a habitual action.

10. Fill in the missing word, for example

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| A | <i>Emily shu btéshéghel?</i> | أ Emily شو بتشتغل؟ |
| B | <i>hiyye m<u>callme</u>.</i> | ب هي معلمة. |
| a. A | <i>Féyruuz shu _____?</i> | فیروز شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>hiyye doktuura.</i> | هي دكتورة. |
| b. A | <i>Alison shu _____?</i> | اليسون شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>hiyye mudiira.</i> | هي مديرة. |
| c. A | <i>Riima shu _____?</i> | ريما شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>hiyye taalbe.</i> | هي طالبة. |
| d. A | <i>Mark shu _____?</i> | مارك شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>huwwa safir.</i> | هو سفير. |
| e. A | <i>John shu _____?</i> | جون شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>huwwa mwazzaf.</i> | هو موظف. |
| f. A | <i>James shu _____?</i> | جيمس شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>huwwa sahafi.</i> | هو صحفي. |
| g. A | <i>Hasan shu _____?</i> | حسن شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>huwwa mhandes.</i> | هو مهندس. |
| h. A | <i>عumar shu _____?</i> | عمر شو _____؟ |
| B | <i>huwwa déblomaasi.</i> | هو دبلوماسي. |

Now answer this question about yourself.

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|------------------|
| A | <i>énte shu btéshéghel?</i> | أ انت شو بتشتغل؟ |
| | <i>énti shu btéshégheli?</i> | انتي شو بتشتغلي؟ |
| B | <i>ana _____</i> | ب أنا _____ |

MARITAL STATUS => You will find that you are often asked if you are married. Again, you have to choose between the masculine and feminine form of the word. *métzawwej* متزوج is an adjective meaning "married" and can be made feminine by adding a *taa marbuuta* ة to the end. Remember that the verb "to be" is not used in simple sentences like this.

<i>énte métzawwej?</i>	(Are) you married?	انت متزوج؟
<i>ee, ana métzawwej.</i>	Yes, I (am) married.	ايه، أنا متزوج.

or, if you are speaking to or about a woman

<i>énti métzawwej?</i>	(Are) you married?	انتي متزوجة؟
<i>ee, ana métzawwej.</i>	Yes, I (am) married.	ايه، أنا متزوجة.

SIMPLE NEGATIVE SENTENCES => To negate a simple sentence, use the word *muu* مو before the word you wish to negate, for example:

<i>énte métzawwej?</i>	Are you married? (to a man)	انت متزوج؟
<i>la, ana muu métzawwej.</i>	No, I am not married.	لا، أنا مو متزوج.

Or, if you want to be more precise about your marital status:

<i>a^qzab, qazba'</i>	single	اعزب، عزيباء
<i>khaateb, makhtuube</i>	engaged	خاطب، مخطوبة
<i>m^tallaq, m^tallaq^a</i>	divorced	مطلق، مطلقة
<i>armal, armale</i>	widowed	ارمل، ارملة

For women in the Middle East however, if a man who is unknown to you asks about your marital status (and he is not asking in an official capacity), it can help to avoid unwanted attentions to answer that you are married, even if you are not.

11. Answer this question about yourself.

A <i>énte métzawwej?</i>	أ انت متزوج؟
énti métzawwej?	انتي متزوجة؟

B _____ ب

I DON'T KNOW => We will deal with verbs in detail later. For the time being, a very useful verbal expression to know is

<i>maa ba^qref</i>	I don't know.	ما بعرف
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12. Look at these pictures and answer these questions about the marital status of each person, for example

A *Emily métzawwje?*

أ Emily متزوجة؟

B *ee, métzawwje.*

ب ايه، متزوجة.

a. A *Alison métzawwje?*

اليسون متزوجة؟

B _____.

b. A *John métzawwej?*

جون متزوج؟

B _____.

c. A *James métzawwej?*

جيمس متزوج؟

B _____.

d. A *Mark métzawwej?*

مارك متزوج؟

B _____.

e. A *Hasan métzawwej?*

حسن متزوج؟

B _____.

f. A *Rüma métzawwje?*

ريما متزوجة؟

B _____.

g. A *Féyruuz métzawwje?*

فیروز متزوجة؟

B _____.

h. A *عumar métzawwej?*

عمر متزوج؟

B _____.

POSSESSION USING ATTACHED PRONOUNS We learnt how to use attached pronouns to say “my name”. You can use these attached pronouns with any noun to indicate possession, for example

<i>zawj</i>	husband	زوج
+ <i>i</i> > <i>zawji</i>	+ my > my husband	+ زوجي
+ <i>ek</i> > <i>zawjek</i>	+ your (f) > your husband	+ زوجك
+ <i>a</i> > <i>zawja</i>	+ her > her husband	+ زوجها

Here, *zawj* (a husband) ends in a consonant. If the word is feminine and ends in a *taa marbuuta* ة or ئ however, the *taa marbuuta* is changes to a ‘t’ sound when a pronoun is attached, for example

<i>zawje</i>	wife	زوجة
+ <i>i</i> > <i>zawjti</i>	+ my > my wife	+ زوجتي
+ <i>ak</i> > <i>zawjtak</i>	+ your (m) > your wife	+ زوجتك
+ <i>o</i> > <i>zawjto</i>	+ his > his wife	+ زوجته

There is only one word for “husband” while several are used for “wife”. Of these, *mara* مرأة is the most colloquial term and is often avoided in polite company.

<i>mara</i> + <i>i</i> > <i>marti</i>	wife + my > my wife	مرأة + ي > مرتى
<i>madaam</i> + <i>i</i> > <i>madaamti</i>	wife + my > my wife	مدام + ي > مداماتى

Note that when you attach a pronoun to *madaam* مدام you also add *ataa marbuuta*. Pronouns can be attached in the same way to

<i>khatiib</i> , <i>khatiibe</i>	a fiancé(e)	خطيب، خطيبة
<i>rفيق</i> , <i>rفيqa</i>	a friend, a companion	رفيق، رفيقة

13. Answer this question about your spouse, fiancé(e) or partner.

(this question if you are a woman)

A <i>zawjek</i>		زوجك
<i>khatiibek</i>	<i>shu ésmo?</i>	شو اسمه؟
<i>rفيqek</i>		{ خطيبك رفيقك

B _____ -*i* *ésmo* _____ ب _____ ي اسمه _____

(this question if you are a man)

A <i>zawjtak</i>		زوجتك
<i>khatiibtak</i>	<i>shu ésmha?</i>	شو اسمها؟
<i>rفيqtak</i>		{ خطيبتك رفيفتك

B _____ -*ti* *ésmha* _____ تي اسمها _____ ب _____